



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 26, 2014

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Riverside Tops Participation In Cool California Contest; Battling for Overall Title

Riverside receives nearly \$18,000 for signing up most people to help reduce energy consumption

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Riverside led 10 California cities in signing up the most residents to participate in the Cool California City Challenge, winning nearly \$18,000 to bolster efforts already underway in Riverside to help the city go green.

Riverside's next challenge is to use its advantage in sign-ups to win the "Coolest California City" designation by reducing Riverside's carbon footprint the most. Ten cities are vying for that overall title by documenting and reducing energy consumption.

Riverside had 846,417 points in the Challenge as of June 26, trailing only Claremont, which had 871,862 points. The contest continues through Aug. 31, with Riverside eligible to win a large chunk of the other \$50,000 set aside for rewarding participation.

"We set the stage for victory in Riverside," Mayor Rusty Bailey said. "I thank everyone for getting involved with this effort, and I encourage those who signed up to document their energy usage, miles travelled and other data that can help Riverside claim the top spot and additional funds."

The sign-up period began April 1 and concluded May 30. Riverside finished ahead of Claremont and Corona, respectively, in signing up the most participants and claimed \$17,793 of the \$50,000 set aside for rewarding sign-up participation. Claremont received \$8,325 and Corona got \$7,604.

The Challenge, however, continues through Aug. 31. Riverside led the Challenge early and has traded the top spot with Claremont several times during the first 10 weeks of the contest. But Claremont remains in front of Riverside despite having only 348 participants compared to Riverside's 748. Riverside still has a great opportunity to win.

"The pathway to victory is open because of our advantage in getting people signed up," Mayor Bailey said. "Claremont folks have outpaced us so far on a per-person basis, but we have an opportunity to win by spending a few minutes going to the website and logging in data points."

The CoolCalifornia City Challenge was created to encourage voluntary carbon footprint reductions throughout the state and to track household greenhouse gas emissions reductions from city to city. The program is designed to integrate with cities' existing sustainability initiatives and support their greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Other cities competing in this year's City Challenge are Arcata, Burlingame, Chula Vista, Mission Viejo, Long Beach and Lynwood. Funding for the prizes is provided by Energy Upgrade California™, a new statewide initiative to educate Californians about how to manage energy in their homes and businesses.

Cities are encouraging residents to take easy steps -- from replacing incandescent light bulbs with CFLs to turning your thermostat up 5 degrees during the daytime and 10 degrees at night -- that can lead to big carbon reductions. Participants log their actions to reduce greenhouse gases onto an online carbon calculator which determines how much carbon is being cut in each municipality.

"The winning cities are blessed with active citizens who took up the challenge of signing up their neighbors to save energy and money," Air Resources Board Chairman Mary D. Nichols said. "Now they also have a cash prize to use for the civic improvement of their choice, on top of the bragging rights."

The winner of the overall Challenge will be named the "Coolest California City" at an awards ceremony at the Air Resources Board meeting in October. The second and third place cities will earn the title, "Cool California City."

"We know we're cool already," Mayor Bailey said. "Now we want to be the coolest!"